

The treatment adopted consisted in local bleeding, cataplasms, mercurial frictions, warm baths, and small doses of calomel and opium. The post-mortem appearances were very similar: viz., a large relaxed uterus with its cervical portion softened, and its inner surface lined with diphtheritic or gangrenous deposit; fibro-purulent exudations in various parts of the cavity of the abdomen; an enlarged spleen; and a dark, fluid blood in all the veins, the heart, and the cerebral sinuses exhibiting, therefore, the signs of a dissolved condition of the blood, which, however, in these cases, was not primary, but the result of the continuation of the diseased process. In the milder cases, cataplasms were only employed, and phosphoric acid given with the beverages; local bleeding, and especially warm baths, being resorted to when the local pain proved excessive. The majority of the patients were dismissed from the wards after undergoing treatment for ten or twelve days. There were also cases of febrile action without any special local manifestation; and others in which, together with a moderately rapid pulse, more or less prostration, and a general feeling of malaise, there was an abnormal enlargement of the abdomen without even strong pressure made upon it giving rise to any pain. The involution of the uterus was performed with remarkable slowness; it remaining relaxed and to be felt above the pubis for a long period. All these cases terminated in recovery. One remarkable fact is, that in certain cases of labour, occurring during the height of the epidemic, in which, on account of the difficulty and prolongation of the labour or the exhaustion of the patient, the worst prognosis was delivered, no ill effects whatever resulted. In fact, during the height of a violent epidemic, certain individuals who are not predisposed to puerperal disease may go through the severest labours, involving the most difficult operations, quite unscathed; while others, the whole course of whose labour has been perfectly normal, become the victims of the severest form of the disease.

As in other epidemics not only did the pregnant and puerperal woman suffer, but the same influence was exerted upon the fetus and child. All the children who were born dead, or died soon after birth, exhibited the plainest signs of the diseased condition of the blood, of which they had become the subject while *in utero*. The blood was dark and fluid, the spleen was enlarged, and the umbilical arteries almost always contained pus.

As to the cause of the present epidemic, none other can be assigned than the prevalence of certain atmospheric influences, the intimate nature of which are unascertainable. If to this it be objected as a more probable circumstance that the disease may have resulted from the miasmatic influences generated within the walls of the institution itself, the reply is that such a conclusion can scarcely be admitted with respect to so newly built and well-contrived an establishment which has never been overcrowded with patients. Moreover, puerperal diseases prevailed at the same time not only in Würzburg, but also in its vicinity, which were not, it is of importance to observe, treated by the same practitioners who were in attendance at the Institution. To these facts may be added the greater prevalence of hemorrhages, and the greater mortality from puerperal diseases which took place at this time. An influence which has often proved very mischievous in Lying-in Hospitals during epidemics, viz., the presence of numerous male individuals, did not come into operation here. Individuality too, exerted no influence; for the feeble and the strong and healthy-looking were alike attacked; and, in fact, the fatal cases occurred among the most strong and powerful women, while the feeble suffered comparatively little.—*Med. Times & Gaz.*, July 14, 1860, from *Scanzoni's Beiträge*, bd. iv.

37. *Case of Periodical Hydruria.* By Prof. SCANZONI.—A Russian lady, 30 years of age, and of strong bodily frame, who had always menstruated regularly, and had borne six living children, was seized four weeks after her last confinement, in 1856, with a sudden and profuse discharge of limpid, uncoloured, scentless fluid, which at the end of three days spontaneously disappeared. Four weeks later a very slight menstrual discharge appeared, which only continued for a few hours, and was followed by another rush of the watery discharge, which as before lasted for three days. From this time the menstruation became very irregular, each sometimes for two or three months, and only lasting when it

did come on usually for half a day, the small quantity of discharge being also remarkably pale and fluid. But immediately after the cessation of menstruation, the watery discharge began to appear with regularity, so that during two years it manifested itself nearly every four weeks. No pain or other symptoms either preceded or accompanied the discharge. The quantity of this clear fluid was always very considerable, and was estimated by the patient at from six to eight quarts (*maass*). Its discharge was almost uninterrupted, but sometimes it passed out with temporary increase. After many attempts at treatment in Moscow, she repaired to Paris, and consulted many practitioners, and among others Jobert, who, as well as his predecessors, regarding the affection as a hydrometra, besides giving various internal medicines, applied the actual cautery three times to the vaginal portion of the cervix uteri! As after a six months' treatment she found herself nowise improved, the patient consulted another practitioner at Kreuznach, and thence she came to Scanzioni at Würzburg. With the exception of an inconsiderable enlargement of the uterus, and a slight degree of anaemia, he could discover nothing abnormal in her appearance. After a while he had an opportunity of seeing her during one of the discharges; and, examining her again, he convinced himself that there was no material enlargement of the cavity of the uterus. He now became very doubtful whether the fluid was really secreted from the uterine mucous membrane, as all whom she had hitherto consulted believed it to be, and an analysis of some of the fluid by Scherer proved it to be nothing but *very aqueous urine*, since the analysis furnished unmistakable urea and uric acid. After nearly four days' duration, the discharge ceased of itself; the patient, much astonished at the conclusion he had come to, remaining six weeks longer under Scanzioni's treatment. During the whole of this time he ordered her to drink the Wildungen chalybeate water, and at the very next expected period the watery secretion did not reappear. Before her departure he recommended a long-continued use of iron. He saw her first in the summer of 1858, and in March, 1859, she wrote him word that for the last five months she had had none of the discharge, while menstruation had become more abundant, and more prolonged.

In seeking for an explanation of this extraordinary case, Professor Scanzioni believes that he is correct in regarding it as a hypercrinia of the kidneys, depending upon a hyperaemia of the urinary system, induced by the condition of the menstruation. The history of the case exhibits the casual connection between the excretion of urine and the menstruation; and it is not to venture too much in ascribing the spare and brief menstrual discharge to a diminished congestion of the genital organs, a hyperaemia of the kidneys, due to no ascertainable cause, taking place simultaneously. That this disturbance of the relations of the circulation may have been accompanied by some anomaly of innervation on the part of the urinary system, is rendered probable by the involuntary and uninterrupted flow of urine which took place, and which could only be explained by a paralysis of the neck of the bladder, however temporary this might have been. Lastly, we have to remember the anaemic condition of the patient; for although it existed in a slight degree only, it is highly probable that it influenced the circulatory disturbances of the organs in question, and, in part, the watery condition of the urine. The case, at all events, is deserving of our notice, contributing as it does to our knowledge of the influence which the menstrual process may exercise on the most various functions, and teaching us care in our diagnosis, the absence of which, in respect to this patient, must be considered as very blamable.—*Med. T. and Gaz.*, Oct. 20, 1860, from *Würzburger Medicin. Zeitschrift*, Bd. i.

38. *Intra-Uterine Smallpox*.—Dr. ALEXANDER R. SIMPSON communicated to the Obstetrical Society of Edinburgh, some time since, an interesting case of this. The mother of the child was attacked with variola on the 5th of February; the eruption appeared on the 7th, began to fade on the 16th or 17th, and the patient so far recovered as to be able to be out of the house on the 23d of the month. She had fairly recovered, and the eruption had faded away, and left only its yet vascular scars behind, when, on the 25th or 26th of the month, twenty or twenty-one days from the time of the commencement of her own